

## JUSTIFICATION OF PROGRAM AND PERFORMANCE

Activity: Natural Programs

Program Components	2001 Estimate	Uncontr/ Related Changes	Program Changes (+/-)	2002 Budget Request	Change From 2001 (+/-)
A. Rivers and Trails Studies	914	+7	-2	919	+5
B. Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance	8,088	+164	-39	8,213	+125
C. National Natural Landmarks	978	+19	-5	992	+14
D. Hydropower Recreation Assistance	801	+7	-2	806	+5
<b>Total Requirements \$(000)</b>	<b>10,781</b>	<b>+197</b>	<b>-48</b>	<b>10,930</b>	<b>+149</b>

### AUTHORIZATION

16 U.S.C. 1271 - 1287	The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, as amended
16 U.S.C. 1241 - 1249	The National Trails System Act, as amended
16 U.S.C. 460l - 460l-3	The Outdoor Recreation Organic Act
16 U.S.C. 797(e), 803(a)	The Federal Power Act, as amended
16 U.S.C. 1a-5	National Park Service Organic Act, as amended
16 U.S.C. 1273	Historic Sites Act of 1935
16 U.S.C. 1-5	General Authorities Act of 1970, as amended
16 U.S.C. 1908	Mining in the National Parks Act of 1976
Public Law 104-333	Omnibus Parks and Public Lands Management Act of 1996

### OVERVIEW

**Natural Programs** include the development and completion of Congressionally mandated studies of river and trail routes for possible inclusion in the National Scenic and Historic Trails or Wild and Scenic Rivers Systems; programs to increase river and trail opportunities through State and local technical assistance; the national trails programs; the management of the National Natural Landmarks program; and programs to assist in the review of agreements with hydropower facilities/projects that impact public access to river and recreational resources.

### APPLICABLE NATIONAL SERVICE MISSION GOALS

- IIIa Natural and cultural resources are conserved through formal partnership programs.
- IIIb Through partnerships with other Federal, State, and local agencies and nonprofit organizations, a nationwide system of parks, open space, rivers, and trails provides educational, recreational, and conservation benefits for the American people.
- IIIc Assisted through Federal funds and programs, the protection of recreational opportunities is achieved through formal mechanisms to ensure continued access for public recreation use.

## **National Recreation and Preservation/Natural Programs**

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### ***A. Rivers and Trails Studies FY 2001 Estimated Program and Anticipated Accomplishments***

**Enacted: \$914,000**

River and trail studies are undertaken when authorized by Congress. In order for a river to be eligible for the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, it must be in a free-flowing condition and possess one or more of the following values to a remarkable degree: scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural or other similar values. Suitability is based upon such factors as the extent of public lands in the immediate environment of the river; funds required for acquisition, development, and management; and local or State interest in acting to protect and manage the river and the feasibility and timeliness of such action. Studies may be the responsibility of either Interior, Agriculture, or the shared responsibility of both departments. Studies of rivers are transmitted to Congress with a Presidential recommendation. Congress then decides whether or not to add the river to the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The Service is currently studying the following rivers: Musconetcong (New Jersey), New (Virginia and West Virginia), and the Taunton River (Massachusetts).

Trails are studied to determine whether they are feasible and desirable to include as a unit of the National Trails System. A determination of desirability for the National Trails System is based on the national significance of the route and the recreational or historic resources along the route. A determination of feasibility is based on the practicability of establishing such a trail in consideration of existing trail opportunities, costs that would be entailed, impact on other values of the resource base, and similar factors. Trail studies are authorized by section 5(c) of Public Law 90-543, as amended, and may also be the responsibility of Interior, Agriculture or the joint responsibility of both departments. When a trail study is transmitted to the Congress it includes the Secretary's recommendation as to the feasibility of establishing the trail. Congress then decides whether or not to add the trail to the National Trails System. The Service is conducting a study of the Old Spanish Trail (New Mexico, Colorado, Utah, Nevada and California) which we expect to complete in FY 2001. The Star-Spangled Banner Trail study was authorized in FY 2000 and will continue in FY 2001 and 2002. The recently authorized Washington-Rochambeau Trail Study extending from New York to Virginia will be funded from this account because National Historic Trail designation will be an alternative considered.

Only two river and trail studies were authorized in the second session of the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress. If no additional river and trail studies are authorized by Congress in FY 2001, available funds would be used (1) to support follow up activities authorized in legislation for several recently designated wild and scenic rivers such as the Concord, Wekiva and lower Delaware, or (2) to support congressionally directed studies for areas that might be designated as heritage corridors, tour routes, affiliated areas or other similar designations that respond to local initiatives but are not units of the National Park System.

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### **FY 2002 BUDGET REQUEST**

	2002 Budget Request	Program Changes (+/-)
▪ Rivers and Trails Studies (\$000)	919	-2
The FY 2002 request for Rivers and Trails Studies is \$0.919 million, which represents an increase of \$5,000 over the FY 2001 enacted level. The FY 2002 proposed programmatic decrease of \$2,000 to Rivers and Trails Studies includes streamlining.		
Justification for this program change is included at the end of this subactivity's presentation.		

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## **National Recreation and Preservation/Natural Programs**

### ***B. Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (Rivers and Trails) Program FY 2001 Estimated Program and Anticipated Accomplishments***

**Enacted: \$8,088,000**

Every year, the National Park Service is approached by over a thousand local leaders seeking help in preserving, enhancing, and developing their communities to be healthier and more livable places. The rivers and trails program lends NPS staff to give advice and assistance to local governments and citizens' groups as they develop strategies to accomplish their communities' goals. This low-cost investment by the Federal Government helps partner organizations and local governments benefit from lessons learned elsewhere in the country. It also helps them successfully navigate the imposing array of resources and strategies already available through Federal agencies and non-governmental groups.

The Rivers and Trails Program adheres to the following key principles: Projects are undertaken only at the expressed request of a local community; the National Park Service generally concludes its involvement within two years; tangible benefits for recreation or conservation are expected; a high level of public participation in planning efforts is encouraged and valued; grant funding from the NPS is not supplied, rather, NPS staff seek to help their project partners leverage necessary funding through public-private partnerships.

Communities aided by Rivers and Trails vary widely, from small, rural communities to metropolitan Dallas to neighborhoods in the Bronx. Some partners are relatively sophisticated local government agencies or established nonprofit groups, while others are groups newly formed to accomplish a single vision, such as a new trail or a greenway. For instance, youth volunteer service corps, natural resource districts, chambers of commerce, and garden clubs have all been NPS partners through rivers and trails.

While these partners each seek to accomplish unique projects, their efforts often can be categorized as follows:

- *Greenway Development* - Most Americans' primary contact with nature and the outdoors comes through close-to-home trails and greenways. Rivers and trails helps communities plan and protect a wide variety of greenways, from urban promenades to buffers of natural wildness. Rivers and trails has been very successful in helping partner communities access Federal "TEA-21" transportation funding.
- *River Conservation Planning* - The NPS offers numerous services that help communities conserve rivers they care about. Projects such as downtown river greenways and watershed protection programs not only benefit natural resources but also bolster local economies by enhancing recreational potential and property values. Moreover, millions of dollars in Federal disaster assistance and flood insurance payments can be prevented through sound river planning that reclaims flood-prone land as park and open space when flooded property owners choose to relocate. The National Park Service also helps States obtain the benefits of Wild and Scenic River designations through an alternate path that lets a State governor assume river management responsibilities instead of the Federal Government.
- *Rail-To-Trail Conversions* - The Service helps communities learn how to recycle abandoned railway corridors by converting them into popular "rail-trails." The Service alerts communities whenever an abandonment of a nearby rail right-of-way is imminent; approximately 400 such notices were provided in FY 2001, giving communities timely opportunities to initiate rail-trail planning for approximately 50 proposed abandonments covering thousands of miles of potential trails.

Rivers and trails program staff are based in 32 field locations to make them more readily accessible to nonprofit organizations and local and State governments in all 50 States. In FY 2001, over 300 new communities requested assistance with their projects, but the Service was able only to help 107 of them due to resource limitations.

## **Immediate Customer Satisfaction/Long-Term Project Benefits**

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The Rivers and Trails Program supports achievement of NPS performance goals IIIb1 and IIIb2: Conservation Assistance and Community Satisfaction. Working onsite with grassroots groups in communities throughout the country helps build a nationwide system of parks, open spaces, rivers, and trails. The program's goal is to add miles of trails and of protected river corridors, and acres of parkland and protected open space that will provide the Nation with educational, recreational, and conservation benefits.

GPRA results are measured both for customer satisfaction immediately following NPS assistance as well as for tangible, measurable preservation or enhancement of river, trail, and open space resources. The Service generally is most involved in these projects only during their early stages, helping local partners develop a project vision and a strategy for bringing the vision to life. Full implementation of rivers and trails-assisted projects typically takes place several years following Park Service involvement; GPRA performance measures are thus designed to assess results five years following NPS involvement.

**Servicewide Performance Goals**

Long-term Goal IIIb1	By Sept. 30, 2005, conserve with NPS partnership assistance 6,800 additional miles of trails, 6,600 additional miles of protected river corridors, and 1,368,900 additional acres of park and open space, from 1997 totals.
Annual Goal IIIb1	By Sept. 30, 2002, conserve with NPS partnership assistance an additional 5,200 miles of trails, an additional 3,700 miles of protected river corridor, and an additional 860,800 acres of park and open space, from 1997 totals.
Long-term Goal IIIb2	By Sept. 30, 2005, 94% of communities served are satisfied with NPS partnership assistance in providing recreational and conservation benefits on lands and waters.
Annual Goal IIIb2	By Sept. 30, 2002, following finalization of the study instrument and methodology in FY 1999, set target that 93.8% of States, communities, and nonprofit organizations served are satisfied with NPS partnership assistance in providing recreational and conservation benefits on lands and waters.

<b>Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Performance Information</b>	<b>FY 2000 Actual</b>	<b>FY 2001 Estimate</b>	<b>FY 2002 Estimate</b>
<b>Trails:</b> Miles protected	2,227	500	500
<b>Rivers:</b> Miles protected	1,037	685	685
<b>Open space:</b> Acres protected	279,026	20,000	20,000
<b>Customer satisfaction:</b> Percent of communities served that were satisfied with assistance	95.7%	95%	95%
* Miles and acres protected are counted five years after a technical assistance project is completed, because local initiatives to protect the resources or construct the trails generally take at least five years to complete.			
Exceptional project results were recorded in FY 2000: 260,000 acres of open space and 460 miles of rivers protected in one Alaska project and 780, 320, and 220 miles of trails in three other projects around the country.			

**National Recreation and Preservation/Natural Programs****FY 2002 BUDGET REQUEST**

	2002 Budget Request	Program Changes (+/-)
▪ Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance (\$000)	8,213	-39
The FY 2002 request for Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance is \$8.213 million, which represents an increase of \$125,000 over the FY 2001 enacted level. The FY 2002 proposed programmatic decrease of \$39,000 to Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance includes streamlining.		
Justification for this program change is included at the end of this subactivity's presentation.		

***C. National Natural Landmarks Program  
FY 2001 Estimated Program and Anticipated Accomplishments***

**Enacted: \$ 978,000**

Qualified sites are evaluated by the National Park Service and designated National Natural Landmarks (NNL) by the Secretary of the Interior. By 1989, 587 NNLs had been designated. In late 1989, a moratorium was placed on consideration of new sites for designation. Based on a management evaluation of the program conducted by the NPS in 1990 to identify material and other weaknesses and propose measures to address them, program improvements were conducted, including the publication of revised program regulations in FY 1999. The revised regulations allowed the resumption of national natural landmarks site evaluations and designations.

In accordance with the FY 1999 program revisions, efforts will continue to ensure that landowners are afforded the opportunity to withdraw their land from existing NNL designations. Although many landowners have been contacted during and since FY 1999 concerning this opportunity, direct mailings and print media notifications have been unable to contact numerous landowners. In FY 2001, the NPS will continue efforts to reach the remaining national natural landmarks landowners. In addition, where landowners have requested the withdrawal of their land from within NNL boundaries the NPS will continue to act upon these requests.

National natural landmarks program responsibilities include monitoring the condition of designated sites, providing liaison with landowners, fostering partnerships with Federal, State, local, and municipal agencies and conservation organizations, providing program information to interested parties, and securing technical assistance to landmark owners or arranging for designation ceremonies when requested.

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### FY 2002 BUDGET REQUEST

	2002 Budget Request	Program Changes (+/-)
■ National Natural Landmarks (\$000)	992	-5
<p>The FY 2002 request for National Natural Landmarks is \$0.992 million, which represents an increase of \$14,000 over the FY 2001 enacted level. The FY 2002 proposed programmatic decrease of \$5,000 to National Natural Landmarks includes streamlining.</p> <p>Justification for this program change is included at the end of this subactivity's presentation.</p>		

#### *D. Hydropower Recreation Assistance* *FY 2001 Estimated Program and Anticipated Accomplishments*

##### **Enacted: \$801,000**

Hydropower Recreation Assistance presents numerous opportunities for river conservation and enhancement of water-based recreation that are fully compatible with continuing and future operations of hydropower facilities.

Consultations with the National Park Service are required under the Federal Power Act, as amended. The NPS makes recommendations and is often involved in collaborative settlement negotiations with hydropower companies and local recreational interests. Many utility companies have found Park Service assistance valuable in reaching agreements to improve recreational access to rivers and protect recreational experiences for all users. The NPS facilitates negotiations, makes recommendations, designs whitewater boating studies, and works with power companies and user groups to lessen conflicts among industry, boaters, and anglers.

Full implementation of recreation related mitigation efforts may take place several years following the National Park Service involvement; GPRA performance measures within this component are designed to examine local results following settlement signing and/or the issuing of a new hydropower operation license. This program has achieved the protection of hundreds of miles of river corridor and trails, and thousands of acres of open space.

In FY 2000, the Park Service added hydropower staff in offices in Alaska, California, Minnesota, and Tennessee, as well as a coordinator in Washington, D.C. Park Service staff are also active on this issue from offices in, Massachusetts, Utah, Washington, and Wisconsin. With the addition of new staff, the NPS hydropower recreation assistance will expand in FY 2001 to work in 20 States, twice as many as in FY 1999.

With the increase of \$300,000 provided in FY 2001, the NPS will be hiring a number of new employees to provide assistance in states that currently have a high demand including: California, Idaho, New York, Oregon, and Washington.

One recent success, the Wilderness Shores Settlement Agreement in Wisconsin and Michigan, was a landmark agreement that addressed eight hydropower projects prior to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's licensing process. The agreement was a collaborative one between Wisconsin Electric, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service, the Michigan Relicensing Coalition, and the River Alliance of Wisconsin. The licensee realized significant savings; resource protection and enhancement benefits are noteworthy. Among the resource protection benefits of this Hydropower Recreation Assistance project are:

- 22,000 acres will be protected, 4,850 of them outside of the project boundary

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- 160 miles of riparian land will be protected with a 200 ft. or larger natural buffer
- instream flows for whitewater boating will be returned to two key river segments
- recreational facilities and access to the water will be developed or improved
- a water trail will be developed throughout the eight projects
- other benefits realized include a fish protection fund, a mitigation and enhancement fund for aquatic habitat restoration, instream flows to protect habitat, and angler access.

The benefits of NPS involvement in hydropower consultations include strong relationships among stakeholders, significant resource protection and enhancement, and major savings of time and money.

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**FY 2002 BUDGET REQUEST**

	2002 Budget Request	Program Changes (+/-)
▪ Hydropower Recreation Assistance (\$000)	806	-2
The FY 2002 request for Hydropower Recreation Assistance is \$0.806 million, which represents an increase of \$5,000 over the FY 2001 enacted level. The FY 2002 proposed programmatic decrease of \$2,000 to Hydropower Recreation Assistance includes streamlining.		
Justification for this program change is included at the end of this subactivity's presentation.		

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**JUSTIFICATION OF FY 2002 BUDGET REQUEST FOR NATURAL PROGRAMS**

	2002 Budget Request	Program Changes (+/-)
Natural Programs \$(000)	10,930	-48

The FY 2002 request for Natural Programs is \$10.930 million and 99 FTE, which represents a net increase of \$0.149 million and a decrease of two FTE from the FY 2001 enacted level. The programmatic decrease of \$48,000 and two FTE in the Natural Programs is justified by the proposed change that follows:

- **Streamlining (-\$48,000; -2 FTE):** The NPS proposes to effect savings in this program by reducing travel and other administrative overhead cost; procurement efficiencies; and making use of technological advances (such as, but not limited to, teleconferencing). Redundant administrative positions will be filled when vacancies arise. The NPS expects to create more efficient systems and processes without affecting program delivery.